

SOUTH WALTON FIRE DISTRICT

911 North County Highway 393, Santa Rosa Beach, Florida 32459

"Prompt, Competent, Caring Response in Time of Need"



The Board of Fire Commissioners of the South Walton Fire District will hold a regular meeting on **February 12, 2024, at 4:00 p.m.** at the South Walton Fire District logistics building - third floor.

The agenda will include, but not be limited to the following:

- I. Call to Order
- II. Public Comment*
- III. Approval of Minutes
Regular Board Meeting: 01.08.2024
- IV. Secretary/Treasurer's Report
- V. Attorney's Report
Trademark Update
Title Insurance Claim Update
- VI. Chief's Report
- VII. Committee Reports
- VIII. Unfinished/Old Business
District Attorney (General Counsel) Contract
Ryan Crawford, Fire Chief
- IX. New Business
- X. Public Comment*
- XI. Adjournment

***Note:** Persons who wish to be placed on the agenda must contact the Administrative Assistant within five days of any meeting and provide the name of the person who will be speaking and the subject to be addressed. If a person decides to appeal any decision made by the Board of Fire Commissioners of the South Walton Fire District concerning any matter considered at such meeting or hearing, he or she will need a record of the proceedings and that, for such purpose, may need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made, which includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based.

SOUTH WALTON FIRE DISTRICT BOARD OF FIRE COMMISSIONERS

Meeting Minutes – February 12, 2024

*****PENDING APPROVAL*****

Commissioners Present: Mark Foley (arrived 4:39 pm), Charlotte Flynt, Maurice Gilbert, Roger Hall, Mike Stange

Commissioners Absent: Brian Christenson and Phil Friday

Call to Order: 4:00 p.m.

Public Comment: Members of the public were invited to comment. There was no public comment.

Commissioner Gilbert announced that a quorum was present.

On a motion duly made by Commissioner Hall and seconded by Commissioner Stange, the Board unanimously approved the minutes of the January 8, 2024, Board of Fire Commissioners' regular meeting.

Secretary/Treasurer's Report: Commissioner Flynt read the December 2023 cash report into the record.

Attorney's Report: Attorney Youell reported that SWFD's Trademark application continues progressing. Attorney Youell reported that she is continuing to seek reimbursement from the title insurance company regarding the Station 5 property located at Geronimo Street and will keep the board updated on any progress that occurs. Attorney Youell could not provide the board with the total reimbursement amount sought after. Commissioner Flynt requested an additional letter be sent to the title company that includes the reimbursement amount sought after. Chief Crawford will provide Attorney Youell with the total amount SWFD spent correcting the property ownership discrepancy.

On a motion duly made by Commissioner Flynt and seconded by Commissioner Hall, the Board unanimously approved Attorney Youell's January 2024 billing statement.

Fire Chief's Report:

Chief Crawford reviewed the Emergency Response Activity Report which included Beach Safety Responses.

Chief Crawford provided an update on the Inter-Local agreement for revenue sharing with Walton County as a component of the Short-Term Rental Registration program. The agreement was originally intended to have been executed in 2023 and has been delayed into 2024 requiring minor date revisions. The revised agreement is scheduled to be placed on the Walton County Board of County Commissioners' February 27, 2024, meeting agenda for final consideration.

Chief Crawford attended an FFCA Board of Directors meeting at the Florida Fire Conference in Orlando on January 8-11, 2024. Crawford also attended a Southeastern Association of Fire Chiefs Board of Directors meeting in Atlanta on Jan 11.

Chief Crawford attended the fire services reception at the Florida Fallen Firefighter Memorial in Tallahassee on February 14, 2024. Family members and fire service agencies

from across the state were on hand to observe the names of those memorialized and formally added to the monument. In addition, Chief Crawford will attend the inaugural “For Love & Honor Gala” organized by the State Fire Marshal’s Office and the Florida Joint Council of Fire and Emergency Services to bring Florida’s Fire Service leadership together for a formal evening honoring the legacy and families of Florida’s fallen firefighters. All funds raised directly support these families.

On February 15, 2024, SWFD will be represented at the Fire Service Day on the Hill where it will be highlighting vehicles and specialized equipment, innovative programs and initiatives, and demonstrations aimed toward enhancing the safety, health, and well-being of SWFD communities. In attendance will be two Fire Inspectors, SWFD’s PIO, and two Beach Lieutenants. The event is organized for awareness of the many unique services Florida’s Fire Service provides to communities throughout the state.

Chief Crawford also attended the FASD legislative symposium and had the opportunity to speak with legislators and staff on bills that will have an impact on the fire service as well as committee meetings in support of several bills and amendments including HB7013 (Special Districts).

Under the leadership of Division Chief DJ Stone, District Chief Chris Kidder, Battalion Chief Lou Jones, and Lieutenant Chris Powell, SWFD facilitated its first internal Company Officer Leadership Development course on January 25-26, 2024. In attendance each day were 20-25 emerging leaders where training focused on soft leadership skills such as personnel issues, company training, time management, tactical decision-making, and incident size-up. Each topic included scenarios, student engagement, and class interaction.

On January 31, 2024, SWFD’s honor guard presented colors at the opening ceremony for the Florida Emergency Preparedness Association’s annual conference at Sandestin Hilton. Chief Crawford was in attendance, participating in a panel discussion on the coordinated statewide response of all fire rescue, USAR, and HAZMAT assets for Hurricanes Ian and Idalia.

SWFD’s Beach Safety Division is gearing up for the seasonal return to South Walton beaches. Lifeguards are scheduled to return Friday, March 1, 2024, from 10 am – 6 pm daily along the county regional beach accesses.

SWFD continues the recruitment of seasonal lifeguards and provides them with initial USLA and EMR training and certification.

Chief Crawford explained that SWFD does not intend to deploy lifeguard towers until the conclusion of spring break. This delay is intended to protect assets that have historically been targeted for vandalism. Staff communicated this change to the Tourist Development Council and will be using a roving lifeguard model at the regional accesses until the conclusion of the spring break period.

Staff have been involved in event planning & coordination for emergency medical services support during the Seaside 1/2 Marathon scheduled to begin at 7 am on February 18, 2024, along Hwy 30A between Seaside and Gulf Place.

Staff have begun preparing for labor negotiations which will begin in earnest this spring. Staff will continue to utilize the professional services of Linda Edwards as SWFD’s lead for negotiations. Chief Crawford anticipates receiving a formal request to begin the bargaining process at any time. The existing agreement with labor will expire on

September 30, 2024.

SWFD is promoting free community CPR training opportunities monthly for the remainder of 2024. These free training courses are made possible through the generosity of funds received through the SWFD's Polar Plunge event on New Year's Day.

The next free CPR training opportunity will be this February 16, 2024, beginning at 9:30 am. Chief Crawford encourages the public to follow South Walton Fire District's social media pages for details on upcoming course dates or send an email to cpr@swfd.org requesting information. All classes are limited to ten (10) students to maintain the required instructor-student ratio.

Chief Crawford provided an update on the future Fire Station #6 project. SWFD has hired Universal Engineering Sciences to conduct preliminary Geotechnical services on the parcel identified for the future station. The firm will take ten boring samples for preliminary soil evaluation and results will be expected within the following 30-45 days.

Once the civil engineer reviews the results, SWFD will be prepared to move forward with accepting the agreement to take ownership of the parcel from St. Joe and simultaneously issue a Request for Proposal for architectural design and engineering services.

Chief Crawford provided an update on the remediation efforts of 110 South 393 building which has been ongoing following last summer's flooding event. SWFD is nearing completion and anticipates moving back into the facility by February's end. Chief Crawford thanked members of SWFD's Beach Safety Division and Facilities Maintenance Technician Jimmy Rodgers for the time and effort that has gone into restoring and improving the facility. SWFD intends to begin evaluating the feasibility of site improvements as well as associated costs to construct a new building on the parcel.

SWFD anticipates the presentation of the annual financial audit at the March 11, 2024, regular fire board meeting and has scheduled an Audit Committee meeting for Monday, February 26, 2024, at 3 pm.

SWFD's Annual Awards Ceremony is scheduled for February 17, 2024, at Sandestin Hilton. Fire Commissioners were invited to attend as SWFD members are recognized for the extraordinary work they do throughout the year.

A Firefighters' Pension Board meeting is scheduled for March 4, 2024, at 2:30 pm.

SWFD Administrative Offices will be closed on Monday, February 19, 2024, in observance of Presidents Day.

The next regularly scheduled Board of Fire Commissioners' meeting is scheduled for March 11, 2024, at 4 p.m. in SWFD's Logistics Building Board Room.

Committee Reports: None

Unfinished/Old Business:

Chief Crawford presented a board action whereas Staff recommended that the board consider accepting the negotiated changes to District Attorney Youell's contract included in their board packet.

On a motion duly made by Commissioner Flynt and seconded by Commissioner Hall, the Board unanimously approved the changes to Attorney Youell's contract as presented.

New Business: None

Public Comment: Members of the public were invited to comment. There was no public comment.

Adjourned: The meeting adjourned at 4:43 p.m.